year round and only the youths go to the cattle camps in the riverain pastures, which are never more than a few miles from their villages. The Shilluk are not a pastoral people in the sense that the Nuer and Dinka are, and rely to a much greater extent on agricultural products and on fish, for they are skilled and experienced fishermen. Since their migration to their present territory, it is probable that they have never had a very large cattle population, for their riverain pasture is not extensive.[1]

Shilluk clans[2] are not territorial in basis for they are highly segmented and widely distributed throughout the settlements of Shilluk country; as corporate units they have no real significance except at times of national festivals, and then only in the sphere of ritual and ceremony.

The Shilluk are divided into four main classes or groups of clans:

(i) The *kwareth*: the royal house, who trace descent from Nyikang and from whom the *reth* of the Shilluk is chosen.

(ii) The *ororo*: a disinherited branch of the royal house who do not differ from commoners except in the special functions they perform at the installation of the *reth*, during his lifetime, and at his death. They are a distinct exogamous clan, though they may intermarry with the *kwareth* despite common ancestry.

(iii) The *collo*: the name refers collectively to the main body of the Shilluk clans of which a large number trace descent patrilineally from (*a*) the original followers of Nyikang, (*b*) individuals of other tribes who have migrated and settled in Shilluk country from early times onwards, and (*c*) ancestors who are lost in antiquity, but who may have occupied Shilluk country before the arrival of Nyikang.

(iv) The *baug reth*: the personal attendants of the *reth*, his wives or wives of past *reths*; the descendants of royal slaves obtained by capture; those who volunteer to serve him by reason of their possession by the spirit of Nyikang,[3] and paupers who volunteer for this form of service in order to exist at all. Finally, there are the alleged descendants of those who were enslaved because their close kinsmen committed homicide, though this statement must be examined more critically later.

There are no real caste distinctions between *kwareth*, *ororo*, *collo*, and *baug reth* and, apart from restrictions on the marriages of daughters of a living or past *reth*, they intermarry freely. The *kwareth*, however, by reason of their connexion with Nyikang and subsequent *reths*, are treated with special respect and this extends to those *baug reth* who have close association with the shrines of Nyikang or of dead kings. The Shilluk basic social structure is very similar to that of the Nuer and Dinka, though there are important differences. The segmentation of the population into territorial units and of the clans into localized lineages has, however, a greater permanency and stability. The distinctive feature of the Shilluk political structure is the existence of an established and theoretically omnipotent monarchy and it is in the political sphere

[1] An accurate census taken during the veterinary campaign against trypanosomiasis gives a figure of 25,000. This was after a very severe epidemic in 1946 and it may be assumed that they had lost at least 30 per cent. of their stock. A human census, accurate at any rate within 15 per cent., gives a population figure of 110,000. The ratio of human population to cattle population is therefore between 1:0·5 and 1:0·25. Cf. Nuer where highest ratio given is 1:2·5 and the lowest 1:1·2.

[2] *Kwa*: Literally 'descendants of', prefixing the name of the clan. '*kwa* Okelo'—the descendants of Okelo—and so on.

[3] Often now attendants at the many shrines of Nyikang.

Many things are denied to the young man who has not been properly initiated. He cannot take part in the formal dances, though he may join in the moonlight dances of the children. He is debarred from that pursuit so dear to the heart of the small boy, that is, he is not permitted to go to their tribal fights. However, he enjoys immunity from danger in these fights, as women and boys who have not danced are placed in the same class; it is a disgrace to kill them. In the few cases that I have known of small lads being killed, the ones who did the killing insisted that it was a mistake—that either the weapon had miscarried or they had mistaken the lad for someone else. Some timid lads may delay their initiation through fear, but to the majority it is a challenge to claim the full rights of men. The boy who has not danced is not permitted to wear the large necklaces made from the heavy hairs of the giraffe tail. He may wear a band of a few hairs, but the large ones called wīn are forbidden to him. He is also forbidden to wear the rek, the beads made from the eggshell of the ostrich. He is not permitted to use "ajōño" on his hair. This is a brick-like substance made by taking the cleaning from the floor of the stable in the morning, and then dried cow dung is put with it, and the resulting mixture is made into a loaf and burned with cow dung. It has a brick-like appearance when finished. It is then powdered. The young man puts oil on his head. The dust is poured on his head, and he keeps shaking his head to get it to form little balls. Other red preparations for the head may be used by the small boys. The lad who has not danced is not permitted to wear the skins of the various members of the cat tribe that the men wear at fights and dances. Finally, he is not permitted to make a formal call on the young ladies until after he has danced, and he is not granted any political rights in the village council.

The ages at the time of initiation vary. A strong lad is initiated at an earlier age than a weakling. The older men say that boys dance at an earlier age than they did formerly. The average age now is perhaps fifteen years. Some of the older men say it used to be at least twenty years. When all the older males in a family are dead a boy may be initiated younger so that he can inherit the property of his father, and also to give the family representation in the civic life of the village. Initiations may occur at both the spring and autumn dances. Those initiated the same year have a feeling of relationship for others of the same

15: Oyler M-5 (ca. 1918) 1926 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

After a boy has danced for a year or two, he may dance with a married woman who has no children. After another lapse of time he is eligible to dance with the mother of one child, and so on until he is eligible to dance with any woman. A man never dances with his own wife. Often the girl who first dances with a boy is in love with him, and sometimes they later get married. Such marriages are usually happy. If a young man is not asked by a girl to dance with her within two or three years of his initiation, it is not likely that any girl will ask him to dance with her, as the other girls would ridicule her for dancing with an unpopular man. Such a man usually experiences difficulty in getting a wife, as no woman wants to marry a man who is unpopular with the women. The mother of the young man who has been asked to dance prepares a feast for the girl who asked him to dance, and sometimes the girl prepares a return feast for the young man and some of his friends. Many an old man speaks with great respect of the girl who first asked him to dance. When a man is dancing with a woman he calls her (cīgā) " my wife."

If a boy makes unseemly haste to call on the young ladies after his initiation, his father is angry, and says, " Is your reason for dancing to get the right to call on the women ? "

After a boy has danced he takes a second name. He may choose his own name, often from something he has done, or from a cow he has bought. If he cannot think of a suitable name he may ask his friends for suggestions. In some cases an older man may go to him and say, " Do you have a name ? " If he replies in the negative, the man may make a suggestion. The boy does not announce his name to his parents. They may hear his young friends call him by his new name, and they ask, " Is that his name now ? "

If a man dies leaving only a small son who has not danced, they say, " His property is on the ground (jumē ya piñ). Later when the boy has danced, they say his property has been inherited (alukē).

People who are of the same age are called (tiiṅ ayaj). They are expected to help each other.

The girls may dance when they are very small, but they must wear a sheep-skin. Later, when the girl is larger, and her breasts begin to develop (tiṇē atwj) she wears a calf-skin, which is supplied her by her father. If she has no father or close male relative to get her a calf-skin, she will wear the sheep-skin until she is married, and then her husband

17: Pumphrey G-5 (1934-1938) 1941
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

or survive as a subject element in what was originally their own area. Queen Abudok[17] is said to have prophesied that one day the *Kwar Reth* would eat up the *Collo*. This process can certainly be seen occurring in some localities. For example in the areas of Detwok and Atoadwoi the *Kwar Reth* are already probably more numerous than the *Collo*. The process, however, is probably not conscious and there is no marked *esprit de corps* between different branches of the *Kwar Reth*. There are great areas which contain no *Kwar Reth* and others[18] where the *Kwar Reth*, though present, remain subject to the indigenous *Collo* lineage. Though there is everywhere local rivalry the grave view taken by Queen Abudok is probably unjustified.

The other reason for the inordinate growth of the *Kwar Reth* is their great wealth. Until the Turkish Government began its not very successful attempts at governing the Shilluk with the assistance of their *Reths* the latter were extremely rich in cattle. They acquired these largely in the following way. Whenever one settlement waged unjustified war upon another or refused repeatedly to obey his order, the *Reth* would raise as a "royal levy"[19] the adjacent settlements, who would go and drive off the malefactors' cattle and burn their villages. The strength of the levy would vary with the readily calculable strength of the opposition but a good margin of safety would be allowed to ensure that the levy would win. It is said that such levies were in fact seldom resisted, the victims being glad to save their skins at the cost of most of their cattle. The participators in the levy got a percentage of the cattle taken but the majority went to the *Reth*.

The Ororo.

Ororo is a term used to describe any lineage of the *Kwar Reth* which has been degraded, by act of the *Reth*, to *Collo* rank. Such are described by the Shilluk as being "*Kwar Reth* really, but like *Collo*." Numerically they are inconsiderable, but their origin and status are of

17. A *Nyiwth* who ruled the Shilluk country from Dettim in about 1650.

18. *e.g.*, Awarajuok.

19. *Tiah mi Reth*.

17: Pumphrey G-5 (1934-1938) 1941
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

interest. They owe their origin, so it is said, to a battle fought at Detang in the time of *Reth* Odak against the Anuak in which the Shilluk were worsted. In view of this reverse it was decided at a council of war that contrary to custom the *Reth's* sons should all join in the fight on the following day. Accordingly all went across the river to fight except one called Duwadh, and all who went were killed. This left a great many grandsons of Odak who, since only the son of a *Reth* may be appointed, could never become *Reth*. Duwadh, the sole surviving *Nyireth*, in due course became *Reth* and forthwith degraded the lineages of all the slain *Nyireths* and made them "as *Collo*." In this way the *Kwar Reth* was restricted to the descendants of Duwadh. The descendants of the other sons of Odak were dubbed "*Ororo*," the meaning of which is "sons of a crowd of girls."

It is said that the *Reth* has always possessed and still possesses the privilege of pruning the royal tree by this process of excising branches relatively distant from his own. Nevertheless it appears not to have been used except by *Reth* Duwadh on this occasion.[20] *Reth* Fadiet tried to degrade the lineage of *Reth* Nyadwai (a prolific monarch whose descendants form an unwieldy branch of the family tree) but was unsuccessful. Had he succeeded they would also now be *Ororo*.

Apparently degradation of a lineage was effected in the following way. Its representatives were summoned and a sprig of thorn having been stuck into the ground the *Reth* speared a bull and pulled the thorn out. By this act the lineage ceased to be *Kwar Reth*. Hence comes the expression "they have no thorn"[21] which is often used to describe the *Ororo*.

The *Ororo* play the part of masters of ceremonies at the induction into Fashoda of a newly appointed *Reth* and have held for at least seven generations the important chiefship of Tonga. For the purposes of

20. It seems possible that in truth the old *Reths* used this device frequently and that the present *Ororo* are not really all sons of Duwadh but are various lineages at one time or another so degraded. This is conjecture, but no member of the *Ororo* will ever say which is the particular son of Duwadh from whom he is descended. They pass over the subject evasively, and it is unusual for a Shilluk to be either reticent or vague about his ancestry.

21. *bung kodh yi gen*.